IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (previously presented) A method for assessing a loan portfolio comprising a plurality of non-performing loans, said method comprising the steps of:

assigning at least one characteristic to each loan included within the portfolio including at least one of size of outstanding balance, nature of collateral security, lien information, historical payment performance, litigation status, and underwritten valuation;

identifying a current milestone for each loan included within the portfolio at a selected time of assessment from a series of predefined milestones, wherein the series of predefined milestones represent different stages that non-performing loans experience prior to resolution including at least one of not contacted, in negotiation, scheduled for approval, approved, approved delinquent, closed, closed delinquent, paid-in-full, and foreclosed;

creating a business plan for each loan included within the portfolio including planned collections and timing of collections for each loan;

segmenting the loan portfolio based on the at least one characteristic assigned to each loan;

determining planned collections for each loan for the selected time of assessment;

determining actual collections for each loan for the selected time period of assessment;

populating a spreadsheet identifying the current milestone and a cumulative variance between planned collections and actual collections at the current milestone for each loan; and

determining a contribution of a portfolio segment to an overall cumulative loan portfolio variance, wherein the portfolio segment includes each loan included within the portfolio having an assigned characteristic that correlates with a loan characteristic selected by a user for analysis.

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2. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 1 wherein the current milestone for at least one loan comprises one of not contacted, in negotiation, scheduled for approval, approved, approved delinquent, closed, closed delinquent, paid-in-full, and foreclosed.

3. (original) A method according to Claim 1 wherein determining planned collections comprises the steps of denormalizing a business plan to create a list-oriented format for each loan and each planned payment, coding planned payments to an index of time, and determining cumulative planned collections for each loan.

4. (original) A method according to Claim 1 wherein determining actual collections comprises the steps of coding actual payments for each loan to an index of time and determining cumulative actual payments for each loan.

5. (previously presented) A database for a variance tracking system, said database comprising a memory storage having data stored therein, said data comprising:

at least one characteristic associated with each of a plurality of non-performing loans included within a loan portfolio, wherein the at least one characteristic assigned to each loan includes at least one of size of outstanding balance, nature of collateral security, lien information, historical payment performance, litigation status, and underwritten valuation;

a current milestone for each of the plurality of loans, wherein the current milestone is included within a series of predefined milestones, wherein the series of predefined milestones represent different stages that non-performing loans experience prior to resolution including at least one of not contacted, in negotiation, scheduled for approval, approved, approved delinquent, closed, closed delinquent, paid-in-full, and foreclosed;

a business plan for each of the plurality of loans including planned payments and timing of payments for each loan;

segments of the loan portfolio based on the at least one characteristic assigned to each loan;

actual payments for each loan;

indexes of time associated with each planned payment and with each actual payment;

a variance between each planned payment and each actual payment; and

a contribution of each portfolio segment to an overall cumulative loan portfolio variance, wherein each portfolio segment includes each loan included within the portfolio having an assigned characteristic that correlates with a loan characteristic selected by a user for analysis.

6. (previously presented) A computer program for controlling operation of a computer to determine variance in a loan portfolio of non-performing loans, said computer program executable to control the computer to:

assign at least one characteristic to each loan included within the portfolio including at least one of size of outstanding balance, nature of collateral security, lien information, historical payment performance, litigation status, and underwritten valuation;

associate each loan in the portfolio with one of a plurality of milestones, wherein the milestones represent different stages that non-performing loans experience prior to resolution including at least one of not contacted, in negotiation, scheduled for approval, approved, approved delinquent, closed, closed delinquent, paid-in-full, and foreclosed;

create a business plan for each loan included within the portfolio including planned collections and timing of collections for each loan;

segment the loan portfolio based on the at least one characteristic assigned to each loan;

determine cumulative planned collections for each loan for a selected time of assessment;

determine cumulative actual collections for each loan for the selected time period of assessment;

determine a cumulative variance for each loan for the selected time period of assessment based on the cumulative planned collections and cumulative actual collections; and

determine a contribution of each portfolio segment to an overall cumulative loan portfolio variance, wherein each portfolio segment includes each loan included within the portfolio having an assigned characteristic that correlates with a loan characteristic selected by a user for analysis.

7. (original) A computer program according to Claim 6 further executable to control a computer to populate a spreadsheet identifying a current milestone and a cumulative variance between planned collections and actual collections at the milestone for the loan.

8. (original) A computer program according to Claim 6 wherein the milestone for at least one loan comprises one of not contacted, in negotiation, scheduled for approval, approved, approved delinquent, closed, closed delinquent, paid-in-full, and foreclosed.

9. (original) A computer program according to Claim 6 wherein to determine planned collections, said program is executable to control the computer to denormalize a business plan to create a list-oriented format for each loan and each planned payment, and coding planned payments to an index of time.

10. (original) A computer program according to Claim 6 wherein to determine actual collections, said program is executable to control the computer to code actual payments for each loan to an index of time.

11. (previously presented) A variance tracker system for tracking variance in a loan portfolio of non-performing loans, said system comprising:

a database comprising a memory storage having data stored therein, said data comprising at least one characteristic assigned to each loan including at least one of size of outstanding balance, nature of collateral security, lien information, historical payment performance, litigation status, and underwritten valuation; and

a processor coupled to said database, said processor programmed to:

associate each loan in the portfolio with a current milestone at a selected time of assessment from a series of predefined milestones, wherein the series of predefined milestones represent different stages that non-performing loans experience prior to resolution including at least one of not contacted, in negotiation, scheduled for approval, approved, approved delinquent, closed, closed delinquent, paid-in-full, and foreclosed;

store a business plan within the database for each loan included within the portfolio including planned collections and timing of collections for each loan;

segment the loan portfolio based on the at least one characteristic assigned to each loan;

determine cumulative planned collections for each loan for a selected time of assessment;

determine cumulative actual collections for each loan for the selected time period of assessment;

determine a cumulative variance for each loan for the selected time period of assessment based on the cumulative planned collections and cumulative actual collections; and

determine a contribution of each portfolio segment to an overall cumulative loan portfolio variance, wherein each portfolio segment includes each loan included within the portfolio having an assigned characteristic that correlates with a loan characteristic selected by a user for analysis.

12. (original) A system according to Claim 11 wherein said processor is further programmed to populate a spreadsheet identifying a current milestone and a cumulative variance between planned collections and actual collections at the milestone for the loan.

13. (original) A system according to Claim 11 wherein the milestone for at least one loan comprises one of not contacted, in negotiation, scheduled for approval, approved, approved delinquent, closed, closed delinquent, paid-in-full, and foreclosed.

14. (original) A system according to Claim 11 wherein to determine planned collections, said processor is programmed to denormalize a business plan to create a list-oriented format for each loan and each planned payment, and coding planned payments to an index of time.

15. (original) A system program according to Claim 11 wherein to determine actual collections, said processor is programmed to code actual payments for each loan to an index of time.

16. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 1 wherein the at least one characteristic assigned to each loan including real estate secured, other collateral secured, and unsecured.

17. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 1 further comprising:

selecting a portfolio segment to view in the spreadsheet; and

populating the spreadsheet with a current milestone and a cumulative variance between planned collections and actual collections at the current milestone for the loan segment.